

ANSWERING ISKCON

≡ MENU



Why Brahman being the light of Krishna is untenable.

december 17, 2021 by publisher, posted in arguments against iskcon, bhagavat gita related arguments

We come across the theory from Iskcon that Brahman is the light which comes from the body of Shri Krishna. Iskcon uses Brahma Samhita and the Bhagavat Gita verse 14.27, Brahma Samhita cannot be considered since it is a sectarian text, it is believed only by Iskcon and not even by other Vaishnava Sampradayas. Hence we will look at the verse in Bhagavat Gita again, although we have looked at it. This time we will look in little more


detail.

मूल श्लोकः

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च॥14.27॥

It means, I am the Pratishtha of Brahman which is immortal and unchanging whose property is to be ever present, whose bliss is born of aloneness.

Now Pratishtha here is taken by Iskcon, to mean the basis, but does this agree with the Veda ? Pratishtha as per the Veda seems something different, following is what the Chandogya 7.24.1 says “भगवः कस्मिन्नतिष्ठित इति स्वे महिम्नि” 

meaning: Oh Bhagavan in what is that Pratishtha of Bhuma, in it's own expanse.

Hence Pratishtha here means expanse, hence Shri Krishna sees himself to be the expanse of Brahman, therefore “ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽहम्” means I am the expanse of Brahman, and Brahman and it's expanse are not different.

How do we say this ?

Vishnu Puranam says the following

श्रुवमेकाक्षरं ब्रह्म ओमित्येव व्यवस्थितम्बृहत्वाद्बृहणत्वाच्च तद्रहस्यमभिधीयते २२

Ref:3.3.22 Vishnu Purananam

Translation: That Brahman which is undecaying is established in the letter Om. That which is big, that which is pervasive that is known as Brahman.

बृहणत्वात् - that which pervades.

तत् ब्रह्म इति अभिधीयते - that is called as Brahman in this way.

Hence Brahman and it's expansion are not different.

Alternatively even if we take the sentence ब्रह्मणः हि प्रतिष्ठा अहम् - I am the abode or base of Brahman, there is no way to prove that the अहम् or I is referring to Shri Krishna's body.

In fact Adi Shankaracharya says the following in his commentary

“इति प्रतिष्ठा अहं प्रत्यगात्मा” meaning Abode in the way of Inner Self.

Here Inner self refers to as the “I” which is present in all as the witness.

Now on what basis I say this, again I say this on the basis of Gita itself.

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत Gita 13.3

Meaning: Know me to be the knower or witness present in all bodies oh Arjuna.

Iskcon may argue, that this refers to merely the **Paramatma aspect**, this also the Gita does not allow. Since it defines क्षेत्रज्ञ or knower very clearly.

The Gita says the following

इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं सङ्घातश्चेतनाधृतिः।

एतक्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम्॥13.7॥

Translation: Desire, repulsion, happiness, sorrow, the aggregate (of body and organs), sentience, fortitude- this field, together with its modifications, has been spoken of briefly.

Here the whole gambit of thoughts and emotions are included in the field of क्षेत्र (Kshetra) or known, not the क्षेत्रज्ञ (Kshetrajna) or knower. Hence the Paramatma proposed by Iskcon is not the क्षेत्रज्ञ (Kshetrajna) or knower, why? Since the Paramatma told by Iskcon is responsible for creation of the world, for creating the world an इच्छा or intent has to be present, but that is also क्षेत्र (Kshetra) or known. Not the क्षेत्रज्ञ (Kshetrajna) or knower, such a witness does not even have इच्छा or intent. Therefore Paramatma told by Iskconites is not the क्षेत्रज्ञ (Kshetrajna) or knower talked about by Shri Krishna.

Shri Krishna himself acknowledges that he was in the state of Aham Brahmasmi when he told the Gita to Arjuna.

The proof is from Mahabharata

परं हि ब्रह्म कथितं योगयुक्तेन तन्मया इतिहासं तु वक्षामि तस्मिन्थं पुरातनम्

Ref: Mahabharata , Ashwamedha Parva Chapter 16 verse 12

Meaning: I have talked of the Parabrahman in the state enjoined in Yoga (state of Aham Brahmasmi) and full of it. Now I will tell you an old history for explaining what you asked for.

So this means Shri Krishna is very emphatically telling that he was in a state of Aham Brahmasmi and did not consider himself as merely as his body as told by Iskconites.

One more proof for this is the Bhagavat Gita is as follows

मूल श्लोकः वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः।

मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः॥10.37॥

Meaning: Among Vrishnis I am Vasudeva, among Pandavas I am Dhananjaya among Munis or Saints I am Vyasa among the poets I am Ushana.

Here Vrishni is a subclan in the Yadavas, Shri Krishna belongs to that clan, (वासुदेव) VAsudeva signifies son of Vasudeva (वसुदेव), this refers to his own body and identity as Krishna having the dark cloud complexion wearing a golden garment. Such an identity is seen at the same level as that of Arjuna. This clearly shows that Shri Krishna sees his identity beyond his dark cloud complexioned yellow garment wearing body. This completely disables Shri Krishna being the Supreme personality God head, which if seen from the perspective of the Bhagavat Gita alone not based on commentary but simply verses, disables the very prospect of Supreme personality Godhead.

Now there is only one more weapon which Iskconites have to prove the personality Godhead, the quote from the Kathopanishad.

नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानाम्

Ref:Kathopanishad 2.2.13

Actually it is Nityaha Anityanam, meaning eternal among the non eternal. But let us take the way Iskconites take it, "nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānām" they take it as eternal among the eternal and conscious among the conscious, here the eternal among eternal is the Supreme Personality Godhead as per them, this verse confirms that there is an Ishwara and there is Jiva, ok but where in the verse it is clearly indicates that Supreme reality ought to be personal with a form? No where, also we can very easily interpret this verse from an Advaitic perspective, how one may ask, just think of various empty pots in an open field.

So it is the space among all pots spaces, which here indicates oneness, similarly the eternal principle in all Jivas the conscious principle in all Jivas, the Jivas are like the pot spaces, just as the space is apparently limited by pot and due to the pot it is called pot space, similarly the all pervading eternal consciousness is called Jiva due to the limiting adjuncts of body and mind. This way there is no harm to Advaita Vedanta done by this verse.

Now we will look at how Madhvacharya interprets this verse, the commentary is as follows

ब्रह्मण इति। ब्रह्मणो मायायाः।

Meaning: Of that Brahman indicates Brahman's Maya.

What is the Maya as per him, Maya is Lakshmi he quotes the Padmapurana as follows in his Gita Bhashya 14:26, following is what he quotes

-बद्धा वापि तु मुक्ता वा न रमावत्प्रिया हरेः इति पादो-

Meaning: No one bound or liberated is dear to Hari like Lakshmi.

This means that even Madhwacharya who according to the Iskconites is from their own Sampradaya, does not agree with them on the interpretation of the Gita verse 14.27

We also quote the Antaryami Brahmana, from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

Verse 3.7.4-योऽप्सु तिष्ठन्नद्व्योऽन्तरः, यमापो न विदुः, यस्यापः शरीरम्, योऽपोऽन्तरो यमयति, एष त आत्मानन्तर्याम्यमृतः ॥ ४ ॥

That who inhabits water but is within it, whom water does not know, whose body is water, and who controls water from within, is the Internal Ruler, your own Immortal Antarayamin Atman/Self.

Verse 3.7.5-योऽग्नौ तिष्ठन्नग्नेरन्तरः, यमग्निर्न वेद, यस्याग्निः शरीरम्, योऽग्निमन्तरो यमयति, एष त आत्मानन्तर्याम्यमृतः ॥ ५ ॥

5. That who inhabits fire but is within it, whom fire does not know, whose body is fire, and who controls fire from within, is the Internal Ruler, your own Antarayamin Atman/Self.

That is why Shri Krishna states the following

मूल श्लोकः

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः।

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च॥10.20॥

English Translation By Swami Gambirananda

10.20 O Gudakesha, I am the Self residing in the hearts of all beings, and I am the beginning and the middle as also the end of (all) beings.

Shri Krishna is stating from this view point of being the Self of all beings.

As a final blow, we quote the Padmapurana

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मायामयमिदं देवि वपुर्मे न तु ताल्किकम्

सृष्टिस्थित्योपसंहारक्रियाजालोपबृंहितम् १६

Translation: O goddess, this my body is illusory and not real, and is augmented with the mass of the acts of creation, maintenance and withdrawal.

अतोऽन्यदात्मनोरूपं द्वैताद्वैतविवर्जितम्
भावाभावविनिर्मुक्तमाद्यंतरहितं प्रिये १७

Translation: O dear one, the nature of the soul is different from this. It is without duality and unity. It is free from existence and non-existence; and without beginning or end.

शुद्धसंवित्प्रभालाभं परमानन्दैकसुंदरम्
रूपमैश्वरमात्मैक्यगम्यं गीतासु कीर्तितम् १८

Translation: It is pure consciousness, has acquired lustre, is beautiful due to great joy, is the form of lord, can be known only through the oneness of the soul, and is told in the Gītā.

Reference: Padmapurana Book 6 (Uttara Khanda) Chapter 175 verses 16 to 18

This completely disables Iskcon's claim that Brahman is a sort of light from Shri Krishna's body, they have no basis to prove this.

PREVIOUS POST

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NEXT POST

[Why the verse 16.B cannot be used against Advaita Vedanta Part 1](#)

8 THOUGHTS ON "WHY BRAHMAN BEING THE LIGHT OF KRISHNA IS UNTENABLE."



विवेकः (Vivēkah)

december 17, 2021 at 4:02 pm

ओन्नमश्चिवाय। 🙏

The last verses that you have quoted from पद्मपुराणम् are present in the श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतामाहात्म्यम्। The 1st chapter's mähātmyam begins & then सुशर्मवृत्तान्तः begins. I remember most of the verses before the description of सुशर्मवृत्तान्तः।

Those verses clearly teaches advaitam. I have gone through them carefully.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मायामयमिदं देवि वपुर्मे न तु तात्त्विकम्।
सृष्टिस्थित्योपसंहारक्रियाजालोपबृंहितम्॥

अतोऽन्यदात्मनोरूपन्दैताद्वैतविवर्जितम्।
भावाभावविनिर्मुक्तमाद्यन्तरहितम्प्रिये॥

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Deepak

January 14, 2022 at 4:09 pm

I've seen some Gaudiyas quote the following excerpt (which apparently is taken from Vishwanatha Chakravarti's purport on Gita 14.27)

"In this regard, Visnu Purana 6.7.76 provides the authority: subhasrayah sa cittasya sarvagasya tathatmanah. This statement is explained by Sridhara Svami. "He is the shelter (asrayah), or the pratistha, of the supreme brahman (sarvagasya atmanah). Thus it is stated by the Lord: I am the shelter of brahman (brahmano hi pratisthaham)."

Did Sridhara Svami really say something like this ?

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विवेकः (Vivēkah)

January 14, 2022 at 12:04 pm

ओन्नमश्शिवाय। 🙏

सूर्यमकरसङ्क्रमणम्यर्वणः हार्दः शुभाकाङ्क्षः पाठकानां कृते। (The सूर्यः has already traversed so)

Coming to the point, mahodaya, where do these ISKCON guys get all these things without even reading things? Here's the वचनम् of श्रीधरस्वामिनः भाष्यम् :
॥14.27॥ तत्र हेतुमाह — ब्रह्मणो हीति। हि यस्माद्ब्रह्मणोऽहं प्रतिष्ठा प्रतिमा? "घनीभूतं ब्रह्मैवाहम्।"

<https://www.gitasupersite.iitk.ac.in/srimad?>

language=dv&field_chapter_value=14&field_nutra_value=27&scsr=1&choose=1

श्रीधरस्वामी आचार्यः is so clear in his गीताभाष्यम् regarding the above verse, he says घनीभूतं ब्रह्मैवाहम्।

Now let's see what does आचार्यः says in विष्णुपुराणभाष्यम्:

Here's the corresponding भाष्यम् part for (6.7.76)

सर्वगस्यात्मनः परब्रह्मणोऽप्याश्रयः प्रतिष्ठा, तदुक्तं भगवता -> ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममूलस्यव्ययस्य च।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य चेति ॥ त्रिभावभावनातीतः असंसारित्वात्। ७५॥

अवदिवतानिन्दया भगवन्मूर्तिधारणामेव दृढीकरोति "अन्ये चे" ति द्वाभ्याम्। ७६॥

I have also quoted his गीताभाष्यम् to mention what he had meant in that verse. आचार्यः has meant rightly that सर्वगस्यात्मनः परब्रह्मणोऽप्याश्रयः this is true that सर्वगस्यात्मनः परब्रह्मणः "अपि" आश्रयः for the BOTH! That is the perfect place of refuge for both. He didn't say that he is the आश्रयः of supreme brahma. Even the verse from विष्णुपुराणम् is very clear. He further says त्रिभावभावनातीतः that which beyond the 3 भावभावनः असंसारित्वात्।

In भाष्यम्, it isn't mentioned as आत्मानः परब्रह्मणि आश्रयः, then this would have meant what they say, but where it's clearly mentioned as सर्वगस्यात्मनः परब्रह्मणः "अपि" आश्रयः Here it's OF equivalent both सर्वगस्यात्मनः परब्रह्मणः are in षष्ठीविभक्तिः। They are seriously funny guys! The problem is that they are funny because they are non devotees of भगवान् श्रीकृष्णः! They claim & show off that they are devotees, but not so.

Next to that, even in the नारदपुराणम् there's a discussion between खाण्डिक्यः & केशिध्वजः similarly.

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Publisher

January 14, 2022 at 12:48 pm

please find the verse below

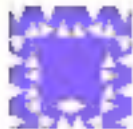
शुभाश्रयस्य चित्तस्य सर्वगस्याचलात्मनः

त्रिभावभावनातीतो मुक्ताये योगिनो नृप ७६ please note that शुभाश्रयस्य चित्तस्य are in the possessive case, so here चित्तस्य of that mind, शुभाश्रयस्य filled with auspiciousness, the सर्वगस्याचलात्मनः all pervading unmoving Atma is beyond the 3 Bhavas, indicated by त्रिभावभावनातीतो, "that gives mukti to Yogis oh King" is

indicated by these 3 Sanskrit words मुक्तये योगिनो नृप . See you must understand that this chapter is a dialogue between Khandigya and Keshidwaja. Keshidwaja is instructing Khandigya on how to realise Hari. So he is telling him ways to purify the mind. Before that Keshidwaja very clearly indicates to Khandigya that the formless part of Hari is superior and the form part of Hari is inferior. So if this is already established how can Vishwanatha Chakravarti provide this as authority is beyond my understanding.

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Reply



Publisher

January 14, 2022 at 6:44 pm

These are the verses

प्रकृतिः सा मम परा व्यक्ताव्यक्ता सनातनी ।
यां प्रविश्य भवन्तीह मुक्ता योगविदुत्तमाः ॥ 2.114.१० ॥
सा सांख्यानं गतिः पार्थ योगिनां च तपस्विनाम्

That is supposed to be the Prakriti which of the nature of Vyakta and Avyakta.
।

"तत् पदं परमं ब्रह्म सर्वं विभजते जगत् ॥ ११ ॥"

That Prakriti is called Brahma which differentiates this world.

"मामेव तद् घनं तेजो ज्ञातुमर्हसि भारत ।"

Know that thick light to be mine oh Bharata

So this particular Prakriti differentiates everything how can it be Nirguna Brahman makes no sense.

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Reply



Deepak

January 14, 2022 at 8:00 pm

Ok. There's also a verse quoted from Harivamsha in Vishvanatha Thakura's commentary

<https://www.bhagavad-gita.us/bhagavad-gita-14-27/>

"The Lord speaks to Arjuna in relation to bringing back the children of the brahmana in Hari Vamsa, Visnu Parva 114:

tat param paramam brahma sarvam vibhajate jagat mamaiva tad ghanam tejo jnatum arhasi bharata

That supreme brahman illuminates the whole universe. You should know that the condensed light belongs to me."

Does Harivamsa have such a verse?

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Publisher

January 14, 2022 at 5:33 pm

Please provide a reference for this, also this does not prove that the light comes out of Krishna. Would need to look at the verses before and after.

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Publisher

January 15, 2022 at 4:52 am

The verse is तत् पदे परमं ब्रह्म सर्वं विभजते जगत् । So that Parabrahman goes ahead and differentiates this world, now Nirguna Brahman is ultimate reality how can that differentiate this world ? Also Sridhara Swami gives the following

॥14.27॥ तत्र हेतुमाह — ब्रह्मणो हीति । हि यस्माद्ब्रह्मणोऽहं प्रतिष्ठा प्रतिमा? घनीभूतं ब्रह्मैवाहम् । यथा घनीभूतः प्रकाश एव सूर्यमण्डलं तद्वदेवेत्यर्थः ।

Translation: I will provide you the reason - of that Brahman alone. Since I am the Pratishta, Pratima or form of Brahman, I am the solidified Brahman. Just as the collected light is the sun same way over here.

So here Sridhara Swami is treating Sri Krishna as a solidified form of Brahman. Here Sridhara Swami interprets the word Pratishta to mean Pratima or form. There is only one verse which serves the purpose of Iskcon, the one from Padma Purana, but then the problem is that, that will make Padma Purana self

contradictory in nature. They also quote Gautamiya Tantra, but we do not know what that book is actually meant for, and if it is only an authority for Vaishnava Sampradayas or all Sampradayas. Even the light which they talk about from Harivamsa does not seem to be Nirguna Brahman, since Nirguna Brahman does not differentiate the world.

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